

I also want to thank you Congressman Huffman for giving us the opportunity to discuss with you and the public the Magnuson/Stevens Act.

My name is Louie Zimm. I have been a lifelong recreational fisherman. I also earned my way through college by commercial fishing. Augmenting my career as a charter boat captain, I was fortunate to serve on scientific research vessels for the Scripps Institution of Oceanography for 23 years. I am now involved in fisheries management. So I draw from a multitude of experiences to speak to you all today.

That the MSA successfully works for West Coast groundfish is a great story that needs to be told. Our fishing community has dealt with yelloweye rockfish rebuilding for many years. The Pacific Fishery Management Council and the MSA called for draconian cuts in 2000. Our communities survived through some pretty lean times as regulations moved sport and commercial fisher folks deeper and shallower by means of Rockfish Conservation Areas to avoid yelloweye. Trawl boats were made fully accountable with the addition of observers and logbooks. In the last few years, managers have slowly loosened the belt, always with an eye toward precaution and not wanting to compromise our hard-fought gains toward recovery, and spread that rebuilding yelloweye stock sparingly across all fleets in order for them to better prosecute their target stocks.

Now we have learned in the latest assessment, the wonderful news that the cow cod stock below Point Conception is now rebuilt 40 years earlier than originally projected. However, managers plan to take the same very precautionary approach, especially in these first years of being rebuilt. The science has showed us that other more resilient shorter lived species are quick to rebound, as they are known for their short term stock fluctuations. Managers hope to take a less precautionary approach with an assessment showing a rebuilt stock, such as petrale sole or widow rockfish. The beauty of the MSA is that it gives managers and decision-makers the flexibility to use the science to make the most appropriate public policy decisions in light of prevailing facts and circumstances. The law fundamentally works, and changes should be explored carefully.

The science relies heavily on data and analyses provided by NMFS. At-sea trawl and hook and line surveys of our fish populations are the key to responsible fishery management. Researchers are now embarking on new fishery independent methods of stock review using ROVs and camera landers as well as acoustic survey techniques. These will allow scientists to evaluate fish stocks that live in rocky and extreme topography that standard trawl surveys cannot access and do it without inadvertently catching the very depleted species that we are trying to rebuild. But this requires funding from both state and federal sources to conduct

this work. As in space travel, "no bucks, no Buck Rogers!"

As for my fishing community in San Diego, we are attempting to rebuild our once famous tuna fishery, by encouraging the landing of high seas migratory species. We have had wonderful support from the Southwest Fisheries Science Center in this.

Our San Diego Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessel fleet work closely with the Center as well. The Center has used the Sportfishing Association of California vessels in their cooperative research programs. SAC vessels have also assisted in the survey of bluefin tuna by taking weights and length data for the IATTC and NMFS. SAC vessels also report electronically all their catches to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife by use of WIFI connected I-Pads.

This is the future of fishing on the West Coast- cooperative and collegial work among our agencies and stakeholders, be they recreational, commercial sport fishers or commercial fishing folks. The Magnuson-Stevens Act as it exists today will facilitate this hopeful future.